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Elizabeth and Landon

NARRATOR Barnes

INTERVIEWER Phyllis Lotz

PLACE "Little Patch" Baseline

DATE Ballard

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Interview with Eliaabeth and Landon Barnes, "Little Patch Ranch"
Baseline, Ballard

Date of Interview: Jan. 14, 1985

Interviewer: Phyllis Lotz

Transcriber: Phyllis Lotz

Begin Tape 1, Side 1

PL: Introduction

Mr. B: My father was Frank Barnes and mother was Lulu Keenen.

My father was born in either Indiana or Illinois, I don't know which, I have lost all that information. I don't know where my mother was born.

PL: Were they married here in the Santa Ynez Valley?

Mr. B: Evidently, because Mother went to school here before they were married. I have a picture of her at Ballard School.

My birthdate is April 29, 1899 and I was born in Los Olivos in that old house. I had two brothers, Fallie and Delbert and one sister, Lottie who married Harvey McDonald.

PL: Fallie is an unusual name, do you know where it came from?

Mother found the names, Landon is not a common name either. My father had some connection with the name Fallie. Father's full name was Frank Hampton Barnes, and my brother was Fallie Hampton Barnes. I was the youngest of the four children. I went to Ballard School and to the old high school on the first site. But I started school in North Dakota.

PL: How did you get to North Dakota?

Mr. B: My mother had died when I was not quite 7 years old, she

buried over here, (Oak Hill Cemetery) so after she died my father took Del, Lottie and me off to North Dakota on the train to my mother's sister, Millie Horn, and we lived there two years. Father did not know what to do with us so he took us there, after a year he came back, but we stayed two years. I started school there but would cry all the time. We went up there in 1906 and passed by San Francisco right after the earthquake. We came back in 1908.

PL: Do you remember the train trip at all?

Mr. B: Oh yes, at Spokane we started up a big mountain but got snowed in so had to go back to Portland to pick up a snow plow. We stayed all night there. We had two engines to pull the train. We ate on the train. I remember my Uncle Will and Aunt Minnie coming to get us in a sleigh through all that snow, that was exciting.

PL: How did you feel about your mother's death?

Mr. B: I was really too young to realize the whole thing. Kids don't know about those things. She died in childbirth, there was no doctor to help her. We were living then in what is now Meadowlark Estates by the river and it was three miles to Santa Ynez. Dr. Smith could not get there in time. Father was not there, he was stagecoaching in San Luis Obispo. He came down with the horses but he was too late. She died from lack of help.

PL: So after two years in North Dakota the family came back to the Santa Ynez Valley?

Mr. B: Yes, to Ballard.

Mrs. B: Was that the house where you shot the skunks?

Mr. B: That was when I was older that I did that. I shot them with a shotgun through the floor. The skunks came in to catch the mice. We were sitting in the kitchen and pretty soon the skunk would stick his nose through the door and look at us so I shot at it. Yes, there was a terrible smell, but the house was big, it had ten rooms, was located on Cottonwood and Lewis Streets. It was later torn down and the wood made another house on Hwy. 101.

PL: Do you remember any of you classmates at Ballard School?

Mr. B: I knew a girl name Bet, she lived with the Lyons. Jeannette (Lyons) never married but her sister Alice married a funny old professor named Francis Potter, a teacher at high school and he used to bring his daughter (Agnes Kleine) to school in a horse and cart and we could hear him coaching her spelling all the way to school, he would hollar, "get it right!, do it again!" Poor old gal, she was so nervous when she got to school she didn't know what she was doing. We were in the same class but then I went beyond her, I left her. She was confused because her father was pushing her. Teachers are like that.

PL: How many students in your class at school?

I wound up with just myself, in the 7th and 8th grades. She was in the 6th grade with me when I went off and left her. I was in school with the Davison children Mark and Norman, Donald and Margaret were too young.

PL: Who was your teacher?

Mr. B: Jeannette Lyons, I went to her for five years at least. Then there was Miss Baker and Miss Keenen. We would make Miss Keenen mad and she would get a headache and send us home but Miss Baker would give us a licken if we messed around with her. Joan Boyd Bard was my Sunday School teacher.

PL: After 8th grade at Ballard, did you go on to a high school?

Mr. B: Yeh, and my brothers and sister had gone there before me. Thats why I did not get any help from any of them, I didn't know anything about the books at school, I just would take them back. Algebra was the main thing, I just could not get it, so I quit and went to work. Two years of high school and then to work. And I have been working every since and never stopped.

PL: What was your father doing at this time?

Mr. B: He was running the hay fields, thats why we were working in the hay fields ,about seven years we would go up and down baling hay in the summer time, all over the valley here and to Los Alamos and half way to Lompoc. With the old horse outfit. I worked on a push thing with a couple of horses that pushed hay up to the baler. Then they would pitch it in. Nowadays they don't do that. I would sit in the dirt all day, 12 hours and twist wire around the bales of hay for a \$1.50 a day, and thats no fun. This was summer work.

PL: What did you do in the winter months?

Mrs. B: I worked at various places, garages, filling stations, sold things. I worked on the highway with pick and shovel driving tractors. I was in the Army for six months. Right after World War I, I couldn't get in because I had the flu, the selective service call me but I was sick. There was an epidemic here in the valley in 1918. Later I went to Bakersfield and got a job in the oil fields, with my cousin Charlie, then to Sacramento and worked in the rice fields, cutting rice. Then we took off for Santa Rosa where my car broke down so I gave it away for 250 dollars and then we went to San Francisco, where my girl friend was living. On Christmas Day I took a bus south and went right through Buellton to Los Angeles, never stopped, and got to Los Angeles flat broke.

PL: Do you remember your first automobile?

Mr. B: As I remember it was a Cadillac. I went to a Santa Barbara junk yard and there was this Cadillac, no top, just running gears and seat. It was a beautifully made care with copper parts so I got it for \$50.00 and started out the hill for home. I painted it and that was my first car. The gears were on the running board.

PL: Now I will turn to Mrs. Barnes and ask how did you meet your husband?

Mrs. B: On a ranch over past Santa Ynez, Perrin owned it the Cuero de Vaca, way up past Happy Canyon. Its called Star Land Ranch now. My father had a job at Perrins as foreman and

I went to be with him.

PL: Where were you born?

Mrs. B: In Minnesota, and I came to California the first time when I was 2. My mother's sister was living in San Diego and my father wanted to see what California looked like. Then I came back when I was 17. My father was a veterinarian and worked at Perrins. He did not practice but he knew his stuff. Perrin hired him to take care of the cattle. I had come to stay with him after my mother died. Then I met Landon and we decided to get married. Landon was up there harvesting. We got married. We went over the mountain and got married. It was an awful thing to do to poor Dad just after Mother died. By that time I was 21, Landon was 23. That was in 1922 and we have been married 62 years.

Mr. B: I was driving a harvester when I met Elizabeth, she would ride with me up on the seat.

Mrs. B: This was so new to me, being in California, it thrilled me. I wrote to my sister and said that he (Landon) had eyelashes as long as a horses. I could roll 100 pound sacks of grain up on the truck, I was very strong in my early days. It was a little bit crazy. I came from a family of 2 boys and 2 girls. My father left after we were married and went back to Victoria. He was upset about me getting married like that. He later came back and stayed with us. We were on the San Lucas Ranch when we were first married. We had that little tin house on

the left as you drive in, (off Hyw. 154, near the bridge) and it is still standing. Funny little tin house and I loved it, because when the acorns fell they landed on its roof at night. We had a little square stove and we sent away to Sears or Montgomery Ward for a black rubber tub so we could take baths. We would heat the water on the stove and pour the water into the tub, the worst part was emptying it, as the rubber would collapse when you lifted it.

PL: Mr. Barnes, who owned the San Lucas Ranch at that time?

Mr. B: Walker, he took over the ranch, it had been in the hands of a bank and he was working at the bank so he made some arrangement to go up to the ranch and run it and buy it.

Mrs. B: Did you and Harvey lease it or farm it before this took place?

Mr. B: I think the bank owned it at that time and then Walker came in to run it. They had some 30 head of old mules on the ranch that they had brought up from L. A. He was a contractor in L.A. building roads there with these mules and when he got through he brought the mules up to the San Lucas and turned them loose on the ranch. I think there was 9,000 acres at that time. There is a lot more land now with Crawford. When we had it there was 9,000 ac. I had fun over there I could ride everyday up in the mountains and we got trout right out of the river. We had fish every day for lunch.

Mrs. B: I would ride into Santa Ynez to get the mail and go to the funny little library to get books.

PL: Were you a city girl?

Mrs. B: Oh no, my father always had a farm. He was sort of a wanderer. I was a athlete, played tennis, highjumped. We were living on the San Lucas when Landon had his tonsils out on the kitchen table, if you can believe that! It just shows how ignorant we were. The doctor was Dr. Smith, he had one three or four operations that same day and when he got to our place it was getting dark and we had no electricity and he ran out of gas. He wanted me to go in and help because he was all alone but I refused. My father was staying with us so he went in to help and said he had never seen such a butchering job in his life. It was a wonder Landon survived. I had a friend from England staying with us and now I wonder how all of us stayed in that little tin house.

PL: How long were you working at the San Lucas?

Mr. B: Almost a year. We started out there because they wanted a cook, but Elizabeth could not even fry potatoes even. The first thing she wanted me to cook was frijoles. Walker's wife was there, she was one of those high toned women, and Elizabeth would bring the milk to the talbe. Then Mrs. Walker accused Elizabeth of giving all the cream to me. I had milked the cow you see. So we had a big fight. Thats when we quit and got out of there. I had not been too happy there, and I got a job baling hay near Buellton.

Elizabeth rented an apartment in Santa Barbara as she was expecting our first child and she went down to be near the hospital. I lived with my sister Lottie and her husband Harvey McDonald for a month and when Elizabeth and our son came back we went to Los Angeles, but only for a short time as I got a call from Mr. Cyril Lamb of the Los Amoles Ranch to come work for him. We came back to this 600 acre ranch of Mr. Lambs. He was an Englishman. Captain McKittrick was there too with his polo ponies and I was to take care of these ponies to break them for polo.

Mrs. B: Cyril Lamb was a most interesting man. He found us a job at Folding Hills Ranch at Nojoqui, owned by Dr. Park, and were there 6 years. We worked for Dr. Park four years and leased it for two years. And then it was sold and we came to Alamo Pintado in 1929, the year of the crash. We stayed there until 1932 or 3.

PL: Tell me a little more about the Lambs?

Mrs. B: He was an Englishman, there had been a colony of English here in the past. He was a gentleman of leisure. He didn't do very much. His wife, Janet, was house mother for the Dean School in Montecito, a private school. She would come home on weekends. Mr. Lamb used to get letters from his half brother, Peter Hansel, who was tutor to the Prince of Wales (Duke of Windsor). I wrote to the Reagans when they had the Queen here. I thought that Cyril had some income from overseas. We were living at the Nojoqui ranch when the twins were born and Dad came to

stay with us. That was 1926 and Dad had a job at the Alisal Ranch. We went to the Alamo Pintado Ranch and were there 4 years. Mr. Howard had the ranch. They lived in Mission Canyon, Santa Barbara. He bought it and lost it. He didn't know what he was doing.

Mr. B: He farmed both side of the road (Alamo Pintado Road) he drilled three or four wells and spent thousands of dollars but could not get water. The well drillers jipped him because they did find water but didn't tell him. They were crooked drillers from L.A. He asked me about it and I told him there was water, they went to 600 ft. But they got his money.

PL: What did you do at the Alisal?

Mr. B: Guess I was doing two things, working for Elizabeth's father and farming.

Mrs. B: He helped Dad put the flat saddles on the thoroughbreds. Going over jumps and Landon was a marvelous rider. My father had broken his hip so I took over the job, training 12 mares and 12 foals and training 3 two year olds. Charlie Perkins owned the ranch then. I took care of Flying Ebony. He was there for stud. He was a great horse. At the time he (C. Perkins) paid \$60,000 for him but now, my god, they would pay a million for a horse like that! Then Perkins had hunters too and cross country races.

End of Side 1, Tape 1

Begin Side 1, Tape 1

PL: What kept the ranch going?

Mr. B: Each of them, Mr. and Mrs. Perkins, had a quarter of a million dollars a piece. The ranch was a hobby and it was a beautiful place. They did not live there all the time, had a home in Montecito. they would come up here and finally they build a house here.

PL: Did you know Mary Russell Perkins?

Mr. B: Yes, she lived there too and she had as much money as Mr. Perkins. They went together on the ranch. She was always worried about him because at that time there was a lot of kidnapping going on and every time Mr. Perkins went out riding, and if he wasn't back at the right time she worried.

Mrs. B: We were living on Alamo Pintado when the Lindbergh baby was kidnapped. Mr. Perkins had a bodyguard.

PL: I'd like to go back to the polo ponies, how do you train a horse for that?

Mr. B: You want a smaller horse that is fast, quick, the Arabians make a good polo pony and Thoroughbreds too. Anything that is fast on it's feet. Trained so they turn fast, and both the rider and horse have their eyes on the ball. We were just breaking the horses to ride at McKittricks. Getting then used to the saddle. Then they were turned over to polo. McKittrick had all white and gray horses. He was up at Boyd's place first and then moved to Lambs.

McKittrick was a marvelous old man.

PL: I'd like to ask you about your children?

Mrs. B: Our first was a boy, Landon Duncan, born in 1923, and when he was a month old we went to live at Nojoqui. And then in 1926 we had the twin girls, Pamela and Patricia. They are 58 now. We have 11 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren. The grandsons are very interested in getting this ranch, but it cost too much money. We had 10 acres at first but are down to 5 1/2 now. In 1943 we bought this land, 10 acres for \$1,500. we built the house, the living room part used to be a little house down below, that I had lived in (Mr. Barnes). We got windows from the old Minetti Hotel in Santa Ynez, this was during the war and lumber was hard to get. We got used bricks for the fireplace from Alcatraz, that used to be at Gaviota. The bricklayer was quite annoyed with me (Mrs. Barnes) because I wanted to use the old brick.

PL: What did Baseline look like in those early years?

Mr. B: All open space, everything was bare, no buildings, except a house on the corner of Refugio, then the Underhill house and the Drakes, who had a weekend place.

PL: Tell me about Harvey McDonald?

Mr. B: He was my brother-in-law, and we were partners on the San Lucas Ranch when we leased it to farm. It didn't work out well, we did not make any money. We tried to farm it. I had to buy a tractor but it didn't amount to anything. We tried to grow wheat. He worked in Lompoc to make

enough money to buy a place on Alamo Pintado and his father helped with that, but they could not make a go of it and had to give up. He was not a farmer, he wanted to sit on a horse. He worked for J.J. Mitchell for 30 years. He had a terrific personality, and it was perfect for him on Mitchell's ranch.

Another person on Baseline was Amery Hutchensen, I worked for her for awhile, she bought part of the Boyd place, north of here. She was a writer and a real character. She had 100 acres.

PL: You have been happy here then?

Mrs. B: Yes we have. And I really can't guess to the future of the valley.

Mr. B: Too many grapes planted and too many horse ranches. When I was little I went to the little school in Solvang, the Ynez School at the corner of Alisal and Mission now. My father and uncle were raising muscat grapes on the place that is now the Rock House on Old Mission Road. They peddled the grapes all the way to Lompoc. The school house was about ten feet wide and long, with benches, and there were four of us to a bench. The only other building near was Confagulas who farmed up there. This was before the Danes came. When they came the rented houses until they could build. Axel Nielsen went to school with me at Ballard

PL: Do you remember anything about the early days of the reservation?

Mr. B: A man named Flores killed someone out there. It was too bad that people drilled wells so close to the Zaja de Cota Creek, because it took all the water from the reservation and the people need it for drinking and washing clothes.

PL: Why didn't Frank Knight go to jail after he shot Pete Lopez?

Mr. B: Guess they couldn't prove it. But he nearly did. You see there were four or five cowboys walking down the street and they weren't doing anything, just hollaring and yelling but Frank just went Bang!

PL: Thank you very much, Mr. and Mrs. Barnes for this fine interview.